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U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

PROCUREMENTS  
CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

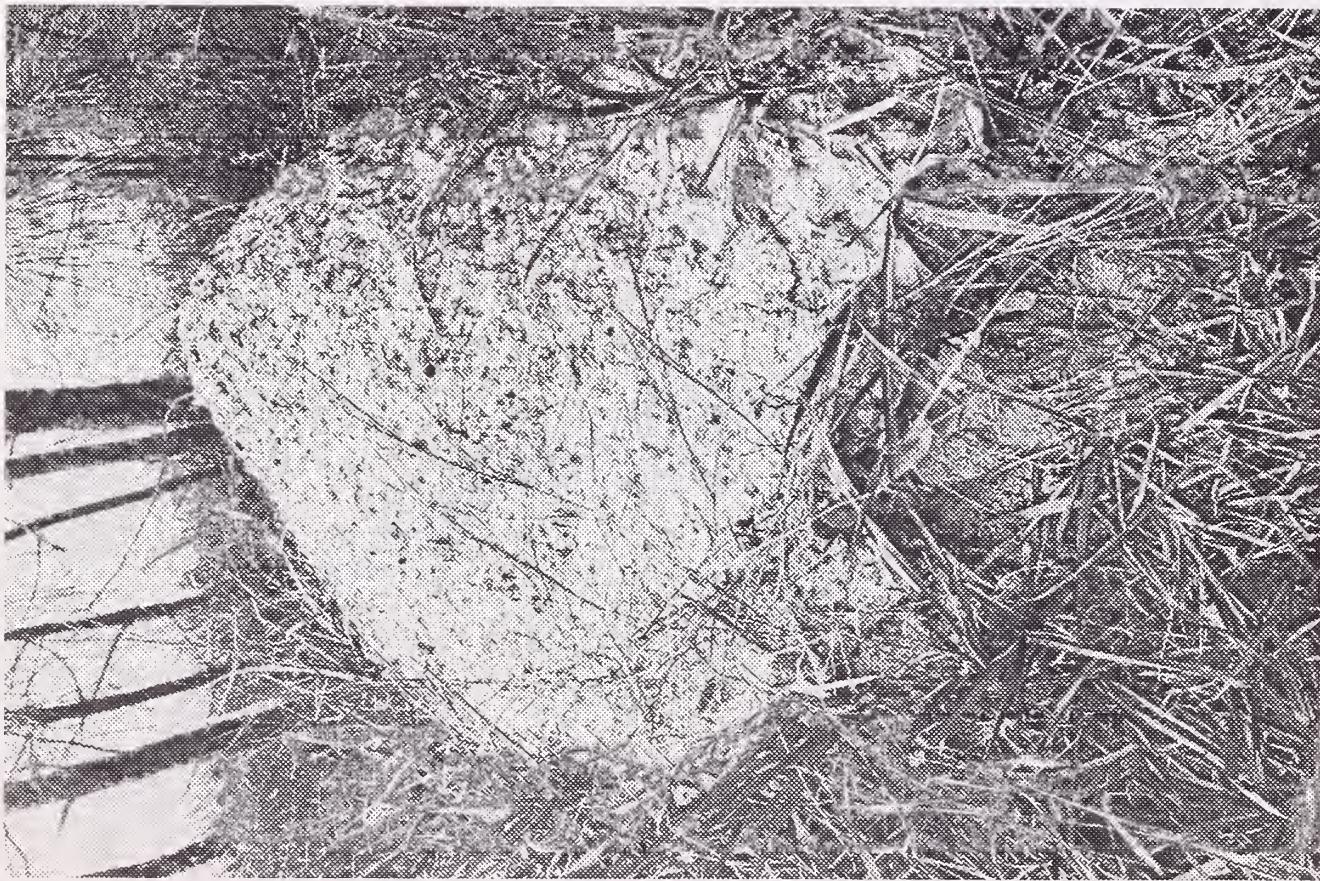


USDA FLIGHTS  
FIRE ANT

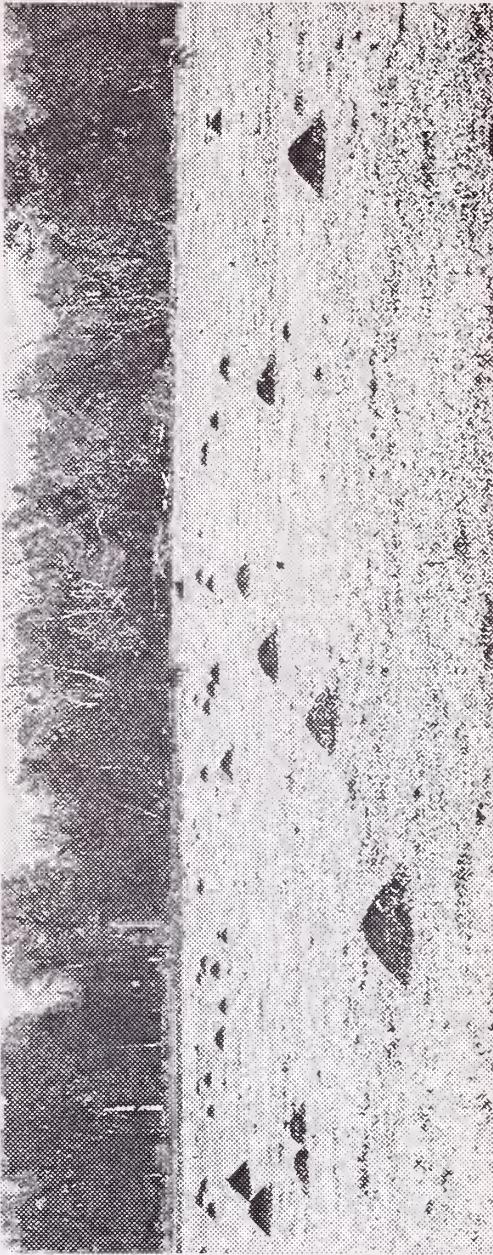
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE •

ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE  
PICTURE STORY 265 - - - JUNE, 1973

## Fighting Fire . . . Ants, That Is:

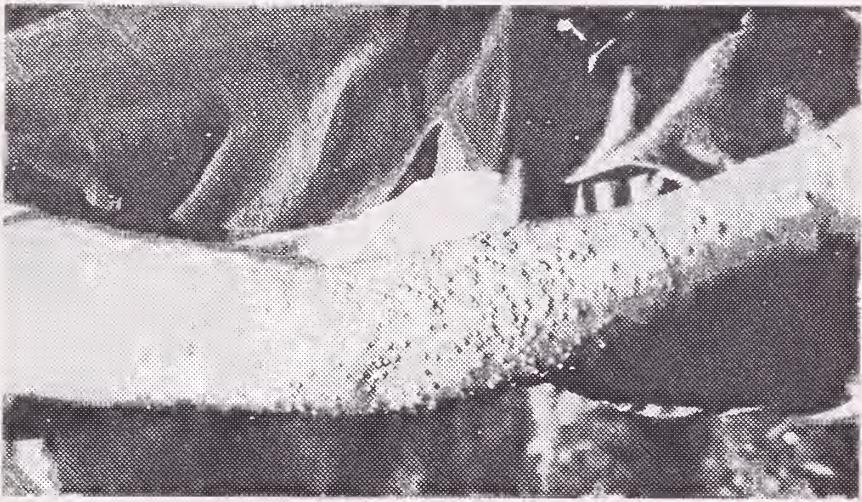


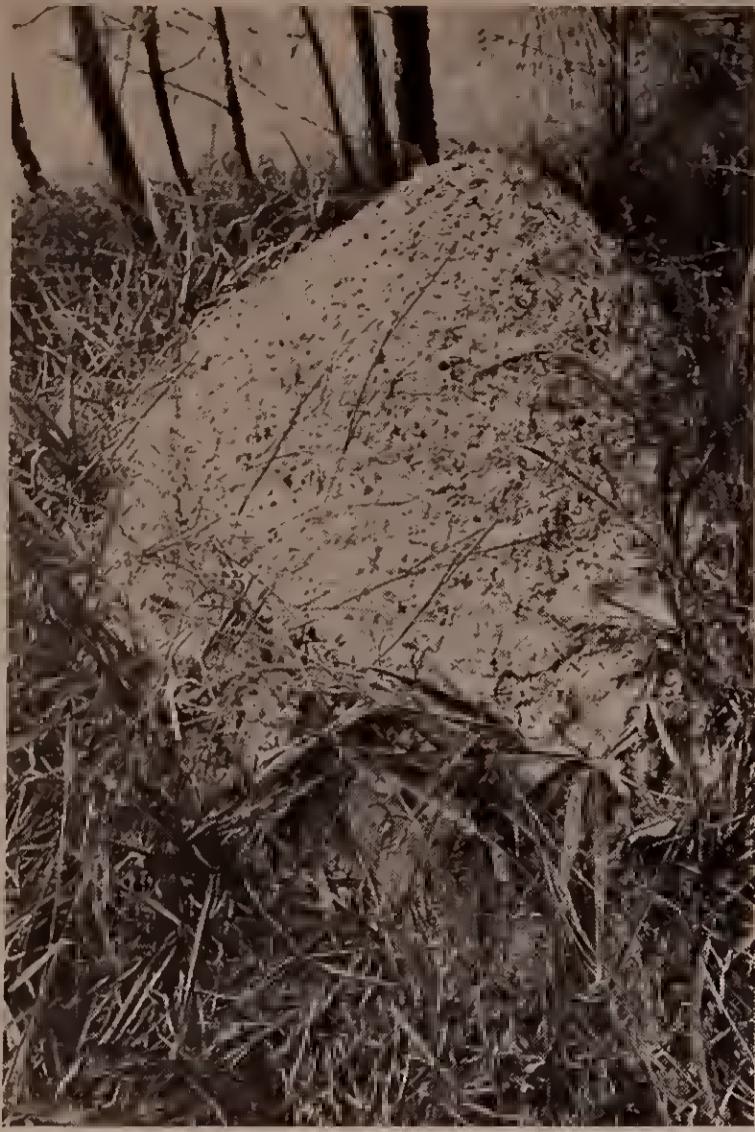
Get too close to this and you're in trouble! This fire ant colony may contain as many as 100,000 fierce "little devils" that come swarming out of the hive at the slightest provocation. A mound begins with one queen and takes about three years to reach 2-3 feet in height. (972A1285-19)



In heavily infested areas, there may be as many as 50 fire ant mounds per acre. On farmland, these large mounds interfere with the operation of combines, mowers, and other farm machinery. In suburban areas, they are eyesores and interfere with property maintenance. Meanwhile, the ants themselves are a menace to farmworkers, children, livestock, and pets. (BN-7569X)

Imported fire ants inflict painful, burring stings, resulting in the formation of pustules (blisters) shown on this young man's arm. These pustules persist for up to 10 days and, if broken may become infected. Medical records show that about 10,000 people annually are stung seriously enough to see a doctor. About half suffer secondary infection. Persons receiving multiple stings, or who are allergic to fire ant venom, may require hospitalization. (BN-37410)





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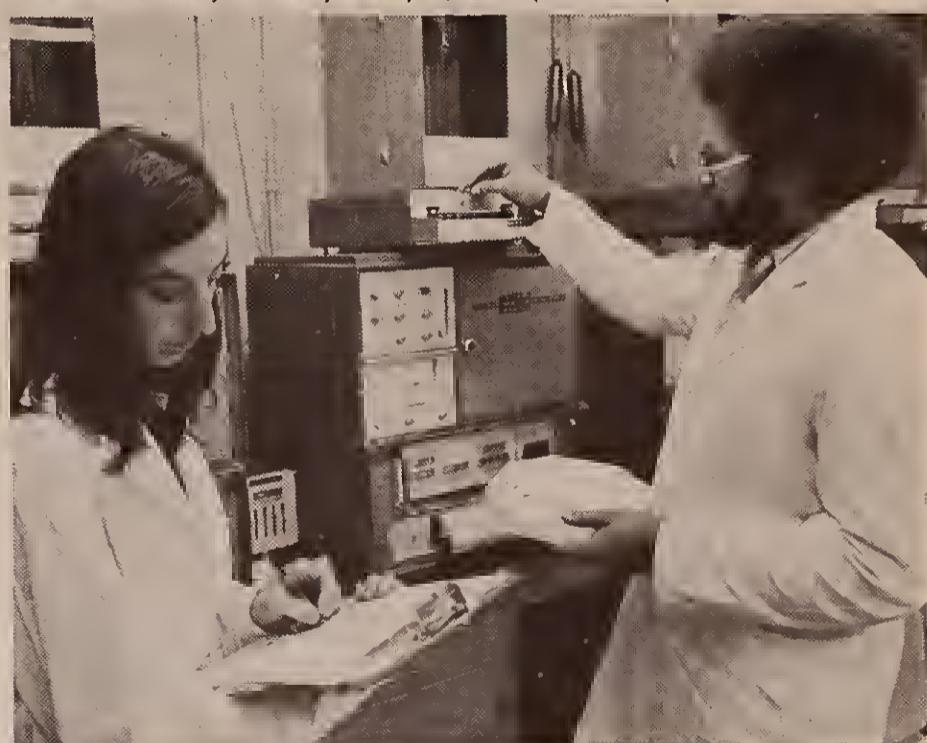
## Fighting Fire . . . Ants, That Is:

The imported fire ant is a stinging insect found both in rural and suburban areas in the Southeastern United States. This fierce insect is not only costly to agriculture, but is also a menace and nuisance to humans. Property infested with imported fire ant mounds is difficult to maintain—whether it be farmland, suburban lawn, playground, cemetery, etc.

Nine states are currently infested with these fire ants: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Texas. Unless kept under control, they could spread westward to the Pacific and as far north as Oregon on the west coast and New Jersey on the east coast.

USDA and state governments are cooperating in programs to control the imported fire ant. Such programs are undertaken only (1) in areas where high ant populations have become a problem, and (2) after affected states formally request federal assistance.

Areas treated in Federal-state cooperative imported fire ant control projects are carefully monitored to assure that there is no detrimental impact on the environment. Samples of soil, water, plants, animals, birds, fish and air from treated areas are collected and studied by USDA's Environmental Quality Laboratory in Gulfport, Miss. (373W265-35)



Hand treatments are used in areas not covered by aerial programs, such as those containing navigable rivers and streams or water used for human consumption. Imported fire ant mounds that survive aerial application must be killed by hand treatments to prevent rapid repopulation of treated areas. Residents of infested areas are asked to cooperate with their state and local governments in these hand-maintenance treatments that follow aerial application projects. (972A1285-6)



It takes only a very small amount of mirex bait applied per acre to effectively control the fire ant. This small vial of mirex—containing one spoonful of the chemical, weighing 1.7 grams—when dissolved in soybean oil and then mixed with 1.25 pounds of granulated corn cob grits is sufficient to wipe out 99 percent of all mounds in a given area. When spread on an infested area, foraging ants carry the bait back to their mound and feed it to the queen, the larva, and small workers. The slow-acting poison kills the queen and other ants that eat it. With the queen dead, all reproductive activity in the mound ceases, and the colony dies off in two to three weeks. (972A1285-11)



The imported fire ant frequently makes its home in bales of hay, making harvests difficult if not impossible. Workers frequently refuse to handle bales in infested fields. Treatment of such "hot spots" is done by the farmer himself, using land vehicles such as this jeep mounted blower. (972A1281-22)

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